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LETTER DATED 19 MARCH 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 15 March 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union on Brčko (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) John WESTON
Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on Brčko issued on 15 March 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the High Representative's announcement on 15 March 1998 on the decision on Brčko by the Arbitral Tribunal to maintain the status quo under the present international supervision arrangements and to defer the final arbitration award to early 1999. The European Union commends the efforts of the Presiding Arbitrator, Mr. Roberts Owen, to pursue a just and fair solution, with coordinated support from the international community.

By maintaining the status quo under international supervision for the present, the decision should reassure the parties of fair and equal treatment while maintaining the impetus for accelerated implementation of Dayton/Paris provisions, notably on refugee return. The European Union expects the parties to remain engaged in dialogue to meet their obligations under the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement.

Specifically, the European Union calls on all parties to implement unreservedly the Arbitral Tribunal's decision. The European Union expects all those concerned to use the interval of time given to them to uphold their commitments to implement all aspects of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement, including allowing refugees and displaced persons to return to their pre-war homes. To that end, the European Union is firmly committed to continuing its support for reconstruction and reconciliation.

The European Union will continue to support the efforts of the High Representative and his Deputy, the Supervisor for Brčko, to build a just and pluralist society and to uphold the Brčko decision.

The European Union remains fully committed to the objectives agreed at the Bonn Peace Implementation Council last December for implementation of the Dayton/Paris Peace Agreement this year and beyond. The Arbitral Tribunal's decision pursues our shared objective of permanent peace, reconciliation and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina.